

SENIORS & VETERANS

Helping Seniors Survive the Recession

The effects of a recession on seniors can be especially profound. Fortunately, we were able to pass several laws which help reduce health care costs, keep seniors in their homes and protect them from scam artists. The General Assembly:

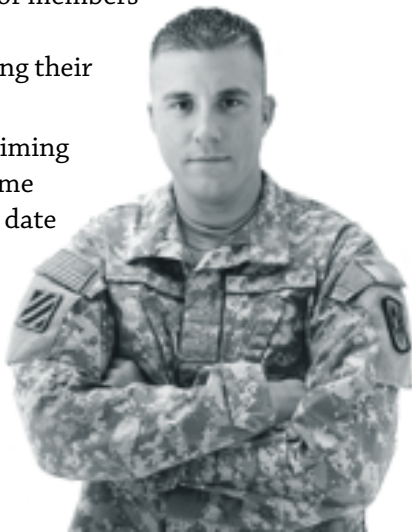
- ▶ Reduced the 15 percent co-pay on the **Home Care Program for Elders** to 6 percent. The reduction will save the average client in the program nearly \$100 per month on co-pays.
- ▶ Reopened the **Alzheimer’s Respite Care Program** to provide respite services for caregivers.
- ▶ Protected the privacy of those who participate in senior center programming by exempting their personal information from the Freedom of Information laws. This means that information including addresses and telephone numbers won’t be available to the public.
- ▶ Passed a bill, supported by the AARP, that could have lowered your electric bill by 15 percent. Unfortunately, Governor Rell vetoed this legislation.



Honoring Veterans, Active-Duty Personnel & Their Families

The General Assembly continued its efforts to support veterans, active-duty personnel and their families. I’m proud that we were able to pass laws that:

- ▶ Extend the expiration date of driver’s licenses for active-duty service members serving out of state.
- ▶ Provide credit or an exemption toward the requirements of a professional license or certificate for members of the armed forces who received substantively similar training during their military service.
- ▶ Honor Vietnam veterans by proclaiming March 30th of each year as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” The date was chosen because it commemorates the return home of the last members of the armed forces who served in Vietnam.



Speaking at Windham Technical High School about the need to restore funding for the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) training program that the governor had eliminated from the budget.

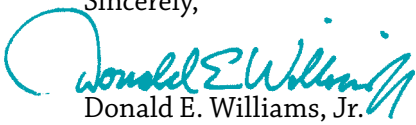
Dear Neighbor,

This session we worked with Governor Rell to pass a historic bipartisan jobs bill. The initiative helps businesses get access to the capital and credit that they need to thrive. We also made Connecticut an easier place to do business by cutting back on red tape and streamlining the regulatory process.

We tackled the budget deficit the same way. Working together, we made significant cuts to state spending, maximized federal aid and eliminated more than \$400 million in state bonding. We did not cut municipal aid, which would have hurt local towns and schools.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you as Connecticut continues on the road to recovery.

Sincerely,


Donald E. Williams, Jr.

State Senator

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EDUCATION

Standing Up For Vocational-Technical Schools

Vo-tech graduates contribute mightily to a well-trained, highly qualified, experienced workforce. That's why I worked with my colleagues to help reform the system and ensure that it has adequate resources. For too long the 10,000 students enrolled in vo-tech high schools have endured understaffing, shortages of classroom and shop supplies, inefficient transportation and virtually no budgetary oversight. The new law will bring increased transparency to vo-tech budgeting and heightened sensitivity by the state Board of Education to the needs of these schools.



Helping Connecticut Schools Race to the Top

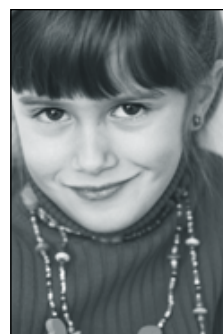


The Obama administration's Race to the Top program made \$4.3 billion available to states that reform public education. To meet that challenge, we approved a landmark education bill that uses technology to track students' academic growth, creates new teacher accountability standards and provides options to fix failing schools. With these reforms Connecticut will have a better

shot at securing Race to the Top funds, closing the achievement gap and ensuring that our graduates can compete in the global economy.

Cracking Down on a Children's Health Risk

According to a recent report, since toxic lead was banned from use in children's toys, some Chinese manufacturers have been turning to another toxic heavy metal: cadmium. It is common in children's jewelry and can cause short- and long-term health concerns. So, beginning July 1, 2014, Connecticut will ban the sale of children's jewelry containing significant amounts of cadmium. The bipartisan initiative will help protect children and give parents more peace of mind.



GROWING JOBS

Landmark Jobs Bill

There was no greater priority this legislative session than helping Connecticut create high-quality jobs. We worked with Governor Rell to do just that. Provisions of the new law include:

- ▶ Loans for small businesses to help fund expansions and additional hires
- ▶ Sales-tax exemptions for machinery and fuel used in renewable energy industries
- ▶ Grants for education and careers in green energy and health information technology



At Putnam Precision Molding in February where I detailed our plan to grow jobs.

Reducing Red Tape for Connecticut Businesses

In business time is money, and now Connecticut businesses will be able to save both. A new law—created with input from business leaders and advocates—streamlines the state's environmental permitting process to make it faster and more predictable for business, without compromising environmental safety.



Outlining how Senate Bill 1 would benefit small businesses such as this independent dry cleaner.

Tax Relief for 'Mom & Pop' Businesses

Senate Democrats led the way in pushing for tax relief for more than 46,000 small businesses across Connecticut, including more than seven hundred in northeastern Connecticut. Senate Bill 1 suspended the \$250 business entity fee for thousands of small 'mom and pop' businesses, and made up for the lost revenue with a small surcharge on the Wall Street bonuses funded by the TARP bailout. This concept was endorsed by a number of chambers of commerce. Despite the bill's veto by Governor Rell, I will continue to advocate for targeted tax relief for struggling small businesses.

GOOD NEWS

High-Quality Jobs in Eastern Connecticut

Two large companies in eastern Connecticut are taking advantage of state grants to expand their operations—and provide high quality jobs to nearby families. Incentives offered by the state helped convince Frito-Lay North America to expand its Killingly plant and preserve 500 jobs. In New London, Electric Boat is using a state grant to help purchase Pfizer's headquarters and create 700 new jobs. We'll continue to look for smart, cost-effective ways to support businesses and improve our economy.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

CT JOB CENTRAL

- ▶ An online job bank where individuals can search for jobs as well as upload their resume and access various employment-related information. 1-866-268-6206 or www.jobcentral.org/ct

SAVE ON YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

- ▶ Choose your electric supplier and the rate you pay for the generation portion of your electric bill may be lowered by ten percent. 1-888-922-3782 or www.ctenergyinfo.com



CHOICES PROGRAM FOR SENIORS

- ▶ The CHOICES Program provides information to persons age 60 and older. Currently, CHOICES is assisting seniors who need help enrolling in Medicare Part D. 1-800-994-9422

FIRST STEP FOR FORECLOSURE RELIEF

- ▶ If you're having trouble paying your mortgage, or are facing delinquency or foreclosure, contact the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) at 1-877-571-2432. CHFA is prepared to give advice, screen your eligibility for potential assistance programs and offer other resources to help you keep your home. You can also contact my office at 1-800-842-1420.



STRONGER "DO NOT CALL" LIST

- ▶ Current law allows the state to impose fines for violations of the "No Sales Solicitation Calls." Legislation passed this year would allow the state to impose an additional \$11,000 fine. To register a telephone number, consumers may call the Federal Trade Commission at 1-888-382-1222 or the state Department of Consumer Protection at 1-800-842-2649.